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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern and further action and initiatives

Statement submitted by the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers is an international non-governmental organization founded in Paris in 1928 and has had consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1961. It now affiliates national associations and individual members in 70 different countries.

The activities of the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers are inspired by the principles of the United Nations Charter, as consecrated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reaffirmed in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the essential goals being the eradication of all forms of discrimination against women and the promotion of women's human rights.

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers considers that the promotion of women's human rights and consequently the elimination of all forms of violence against women and the equal participation in and access of women to all the media are inextricably linked to the recognition of the dignity of each human being.

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The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers believes that a juridical approach to each and both of the issues debated by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session should be taken within the framework of the following questions: To what extent can political and economic power restrain the effective exercise by women of their rights? To what extent is the law a diaphanous mantle that equally covers those who have the power necessary to exercise their rights and those who do not?

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers is of the view that this session of the Commission should emphasize the vital importance of consecrating in all juridical systems the legal concept of equality as a fundamental right of each human person in order to obtain an obligation to respect the dignity of each person and to restrain and eradicate all forms of discrimination against women.

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers has been working towards that goal, studying and debating the legal consequences of these matters in the different seminars and conferences that have been promoted in various countries around the world.

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Statement submitted by the Al-Khoei Foundation, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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The Al-Khoei Foundation would like to express its concerns regarding violations of women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence. The specific subject matter we would like to address is the rights of Muslim women both as members of minority communities who are victims of discrimination in various spheres and within Muslim communities and the rights of women in relation to family, for example, domestic violence and health-related matters (HIV/AIDS awareness among Muslim women and the right to equal access to education, especially in the rural context for the girl child).

Afghanistan

Since the Taliban was removed from power in November 2001, there have been a number of positive developments regarding the status and welfare of women in Afghanistan. These have included women and children gaining greater freedom to

* E/CN.6/2003/1.

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participate in public life. However, with regard to health care, employment and access to education, such developments remain generally confined to the capital, Kabul.

One of the main areas of concern continues to be the personal security and safety of women, which are adversely affected by the current situation. Outside Kabul, an element of lawlessness is apparent according to sources. Such a climate has affected women in gender-specific ways. Although the Declaration of Essential Rights of Afghanistan guarantees protection and rights to women, the question of women's basic security remains.

Women in Afghanistan continue to be victims of violence and harassment, including sexual violence, preventing freedom of movement and freedom of speech and expression. In some cases, as recently reported by Human Rights Watch, there is no adequate system for access to health care and medication in the case of unwanted pregnancies resulting from rape, for example.

We welcome the Interim Administration's public endorsement of the rights of women to obtain an education and employment. Representation of women in all areas is essential to ensuring respect for women's rights, especially during the post-conflict reconstruction phase.

Female genital mutilation

In our view, female genital mutilation is a culturally-specific practice which is not condoned by Islamic law. We remain concerned that many girls in specific regions, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, but also in many other parts of the world, are at risk of mutilation. Female genital mutilation raises numerous human rights issues, including domestic violence and the physical and psychological abuse of children. It also raises serious health-related concerns.

Female genital mutilation has acquired a religious dimension and religion is sometimes used to justify its existence and application. Moreover, female genital mutilation is misleadingly often described, especially in press reports, as a "religious practice", when religion, specifically Islam, does not condone it.

Domestic violence

Physical, verbal, sexual and psychological abuse is forbidden in Islam and the Al-Khoei Foundation strongly condemns all forms of domestic violence and threats.

In this context, we are very concerned about the prevalence of honour killings — which specifically target women only — and their justification on religious grounds. We urge all member States, particularly those that have already signed and/or ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to implement the proper procedures that will address the need to protect women from this practice.

Civil rights of women post-11 September 2001

Muslim women have been targets of physical, verbal and psychological abuse in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. This has also included discrimination in employment. In this context, we are concerned about the rise of Islamophobia and its manifestations in violence against Muslim women and the

recent noticeable rise in the influence of extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi organizations.

Women as refugees and displaced persons

Women remain particularly vulnerable as refugees and displaced persons, both in the context of conflict and migration (forced or otherwise). In refugee camps, the question of sanitation, the right to privacy and to dignity of the individual is paramount. We urge the relevant agencies and Governments to prioritize their efforts in addressing these concerns. We are also highly concerned about the persistence of trafficking in women, especially in relation to refugee and displaced women and girls, a matter that should be addressed urgently by the international community, relevant inter-governmental agencies and Governments.

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Statement submitted by the National Women's Council of Catalonia, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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Report of the National Women's Council of Catalonia to the forty-seventh periodic session of the Commission on the Status of Women (March 2003)

[Original: Spanish]

Foreword

The National Women's Council of Catalonia is the consultative body of the Catalonian Women's Institute, which is a grouping of most of the non-governmental organizations working to promote equal opportunity for women and men in Catalonia, Spain, and which has been in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1999.

Introduction

The Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, identified as an area of special concern the constant projection of negative and degrading images of women, as well as women's unequal access to information technology. After combating poverty and violence, access to technology is now the third priority for the world's women.

What the Platform for Action forecast in 1995 is now an infinitely greater reality. The latest wave of technologies, known as "new technologies" or "information and communication technologies" (ICT), derive from computer science, automated data processing and electronic telecommunications, which have filtered down from the technical sphere into the social and political spheres. The use of computer science and electronic communications has produced the information society.

As ICT plays an ever greater role in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres, there is an ever greater need for sectors that have been silenced, including women, to participate actively in its management, with a view to fully winning the right to communication and strengthening their participation in public discourse and decision-making.

The National Women's Council of Catalonia is well aware of the importance of ICT as a unifying force that can help women to achieve their personal and professional goals and thereby reduce inequalities and discrimination. There are, however, obstacles, such as "differential access", which must be overcome before those goals can be achieved.

"Differential access" refers to the fact that men and women differ in their access to and experiences with computers, so that these technologies reflect traditional masculine values, and therefore women do not feel represented. Moreover, the dominant system of cultural values has discouraged women.

This difference in access, use and attitude begins to show up in childhood, even in the use of computers for play, since the vast majority of computer games are designed for a stereotypically male audience. For girls, however, the supply is meagre and highly manipulative; the games are almost insulting to girls, in that they reflect an image of girls as being interested in nothing but makeup, shopping and so on — in short, the stereotypes most commonly associated with the female sex.

There clearly has been some progress, and in some countries the situation is more evenly balanced, but, women continue to use ICT less than men do, and when we do use these technologies, we mostly do so only as users or consumers, far removed from the centres of creativity and decision-making. Consequently, as women we take less advantage of the benefits that ICT can provide and that are linked to growth, power, employment and wealth.

Women are also a minority in centres of research, science and computational technology.

The clear demarcation of roles within the family may be accentuated by the introduction of ICT. Far from implying a restructuring of internal power relationships, the arrival in the home of a computer — or of any technological innovation may accentuate existing differences.

Conclusions

The National Women's Council of Catalonia believes that the new technologies shaping the information society offer a unique opportunity to promote equality between women and men and restructure professional and day-to-day life; much remains to be done, however, to ensure that potential advantages materialize and to avoid reinforcing existing forms of gender segregation.

Nowadays, since relatively few women take courses in science or technology, they have fewer opportunities to exploit the employment-related advantages deriving from the new technologies (for example, highly skilled jobs in ICT industries, where women are underrepresented). Consequently, extra efforts must be made to increase students' awareness of ICT, in order to ensure that their education is not marred by sexist prejudices and to increase skill levels.

ICT can also help to convey a more positive and diversified image of women, contribute to changing attitudes and support women's more active participation in the production of information. For example, the goal of one of the European equal opportunities projects is to create Europe-wide databases of women who are experts in certain fields and women who participate in political decision-making. Information and communication technologies are used as a tool to educate underprivileged women, and the Internet is used to increase people's awareness of gender equality.

Governments must therefore pay more attention to gender balance in the information society in order to ensure that the potential benefits are shared equally and to avoid the risk of segregation.

We therefore wish to make the following recommendations to Governments:

- Carry out a specific, gender-disaggregated survey on women's use of ICT in the various countries and on their participation in ICT-related jobs and in the telecommunications and information industries;
- Find out more about the specific needs — in terms of access to resources, training and education, and better working conditions — of the various groups of women who might be excluded from the innovation processes, so that venues and strategies may be established to facilitate their inclusion;

- Monitor compliance with the labour rights of women workers in the ICT field and support employee recruitment and selection strategies that do not discriminate against women in the area of wages, benefits and promotions;
- Formulate or adapt legal guidelines regulating the labour rights and obligations of those who choose telecommuting as their means of livelihood;
- Promote public policies to provide universal access to new information and communication technologies and to lower the cost of accessing and using them with a view to overcoming the "digital divide";
- Establish and promote mechanisms to encourage women's participation on an individual or group basis in taking decisions about the design, use and efficiency of technological systems;
- Promote the production and dissemination of children's computer games that avoid gender stereotypes through design and applications that are easily understandable to both girls and boys;
- Formulate a compulsory code of ethics, to be signed by all countries, defining parameters for portraying women and girls in all communications media, with a view to preventing the pornographic and degrading treatment to which they are subjected in certain parts of the communications network;
- Provide education and literacy programmes, using appropriate technologies, aimed especially at low-income girls and women;
- Influence public opinion, with a view to promoting gender equality, on the basis of information and communication programmes using ICT;
- Encourage the appropriate use of ICT in order to eliminate gender disparities, especially in education;
- Take steps to exploit the potential of ICT to reduce the social divide, improve living conditions, and increase access to health services, distance learning and information for women living in rural areas or in underserved communities;
- Develop funding policies and strategies to promote women's access to entrepreneurship based on the development of information and communication technologies, which open up new opportunities for women to be included as entrepreneurs in Internet-based education and health services and in electronic commerce and business;
- Encourage ICT research programmes in developed countries that focus on the eradication of hunger and poverty in the least developed countries, where women are subjected to marginalization and exclusion.

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Statement submitted by the National Women's Council of Catalonia, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* * *

Introduction

On the occasion of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, it is fitting to recall the many texts on the elimination of violence against women, in particular the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security. The Consell nacional de dones de Catalunya (National Women's Council of Catalonia), a governmental advisory body recognized by the United Nations as having consultative status with the Economic Social and Council, which represents 150 organizations numbering more than 30,000 women at this forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women expresses its concern at the persisting infringement of the rights of women through all forms of violence, in

* E/CN.6/2003/1.

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particular gender and domestic violence, with its irreversible physical and mental impact on the lives of millions.

Guiding principles

The National Women's Council of Catalonia declares that gender violence is one of the most covered up and socially tolerated crimes in the world.

We know that domestic violence is a particularly perverse form of gender violence, since it occurs in the place where women and children should feel safest.

We know that there is no country or society that can claim an absence of domestic violence; and that domestic violence is a universal phenomenon that does not depend on culture, class, education, economic level, ethnicity or age.

We nevertheless recognize that countries have made significant progress in recognizing and dealing with this problem. Replies are currently being received at the international, national and regional levels, both from Governments and from non-governmental organizations that assist women and promote their advancement. Yet, despite a global social consensus on the need to address domestic violence, the human rights of women continue to be violated or insufficiently promoted, protected and respected throughout the world.

Consequently, we must forge a broad consensus to end violence against women which will include guidelines, legislative models, education, training and documentation, and any other means to ensure that it is eliminated.

In our view, those guidelines, models and procedures must take into account the points set out below, and Governments must assume responsibility for their implementation.

Recommendations

Legal, judicial and police measures

Practical measures must be introduced which define domestic violence as a specific crime, and which address not only physical violence but also sexual and psychological violence.

Appropriate measures must be taken to initiate procedures in preparation for a pre-trial hearing followed by a criminal trial, on the basis of a court action brought by an individual or by health or social service professionals involved.

Legal measures must be taken to ensure an effective and coordinated response by the legal, police and health services involved in domestic violence proceedings.

Appropriate mechanisms and measures must be established to allow judicial proceedings to advance as rapidly as possible in cases involving violence against women, especially those likely to suffer further abuse in the interval between the opening of the trial and the date of the sentence.

Special units must be created to care for victims in law enforcement and court facilities.

Precautions must be taken to keep the perpetrator away from the family home in the interest of protecting the victim. Measures must also be taken to ensure the safety of victims, and to prevent secondary victimization.

With a view to adopting those legal measures, Governments must agree to:

- Adopt comprehensive action plans against violence as models of good practice, and enact integrated laws prohibiting violence against women.

It is nonetheless clear that the law alone, disconnected from the rest of society, has little value unless accompanied by campaigns to raise awareness about domestic violence. Such campaigns should be designed to:

- Promote understanding of the causes of violence against women, with special attention to the impact of such violence on the unequal distribution of power between men and women.
- Promote public awareness that women are victims of violence simply because they are women.
- Try to convince the victims that they are not alone, and inform them of their rights, the procedures they must follow, and the resources available to them.
- Work to overcome sexist stereotypes and beliefs that lead to outbreaks of violence in the home.
- Sensitize the media to their responsibility to serve as a vehicle for transmitting values based on respect for women's rights.

Education and training

The crucial role played by education in the eradication of violence against women must be recognized, since education is a basic tool for altering attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate sexism and gender violence.

With a view to preventing violence against women through education, the following measures should be adopted:

- Incorporate the fight against sexism and violence into school curricula, and teach students to detect and confront problems that lead to sexism and gender violence.
- Build equality between boys and girls on a daily basis, by creating cooperative experiences designed to surmount the conditions that underlie violence against women, namely, the unequal distribution of power, and the resistance, especially by men, to remedying that inequality.
- Design tools for identifying the boy and girl students in the school who are victims of violence, with a view to preventing the detrimental effects of such behaviour and the likelihood that it will recur.
- Create the necessary conditions for schools to implement effective programmes for the prevention of violence against women, and provide training in theory and in practice, for the teachers who are to execute the programmes.

Specialized training for professionals caring for victims

- Include courses about violence against women in required job training for professionals working with victims, and periodically provide continuing education or refresher courses for them.

Resources and social services for victims

- All countries should set up a network of shelters and alternatives to institutionalization for victims and their children, where they can stay as long as necessary and receive comprehensive care.
- All services and programmes should aim to help women to recover, to organize their lives independently from that of the perpetrator, and to secure a job that will allow them to do so.
- Procedures should be established to assist specific groups to overcome difficulties, like for instance, immigrant women whose legal situation is irregular.
- Services should be set up for the treatment of women victims of violence, on the basis of institutional cooperation, particularly that of non-governmental organizations, creating cooperation mechanisms combining the efforts of Governments, institutions and society.

Rehabilitation of perpetrators

- Rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators, including monitoring and evaluation, should be developed, in order to ensure the safety of women.
- Such programmes are essential in order to help perpetrators to accept their responsibility, and not minimize or justify their behaviour. Rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators should never be substitutes for punishment.
- Rehabilitation of perpetrators must provide mechanisms to ensure that the victim's safety and well-being are never endangered.

The primary objective of such programmes should be the re-education of violent men by changing attitudes that led to violence.

Lastly, the measures described should include studies and research on all forms of violence in order to understand the causes and take measures to wipe it out.

Consequently we urge all States members to be aware of the magnitude of the problem and urgently to undertake all measures and policies described in the Recommendations section of this document, with a view to eliminating violence against all the women of the world irrespective of their race, social status or sexual preference.

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Statement submitted by Equality Now, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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Over 50 years ago, countries adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". That fundamental right has echoed for decades in conferences, treaties and declarations. Almost 10 years ago, in the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing, 189 Governments agreed that laws that explicitly discriminate against women undermine equality, and pledged to revoke any remaining laws that discriminate on the basis of sex. Yet even a sampling of laws demonstrates that inequality, in its most overt form, has not been vanquished.

In 1999, Equality Now published a representative sampling of such laws from 45 countries, in our report *Words and Deeds — Holding Governments Accountable in the Beijing+5 Review Process* (at www.equalitynow.org). The following year, at the special session which was held to review the Platform for Action, the General

* E/CN.6/2003/1.

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Assembly adopted an Outcome Document that established a target date to eradicate discriminatory laws. That target date, 2005, is fast approaching.

We are pleased to report that a number of countries have superseded or repealed the highlighted laws. Members of the Commission on the Status of Women Peru and Turkey are among those countries that have rescinded the discriminatory laws highlighted in Equality Now's report. In doing so, these countries have set the example of moving from words to action, demonstrating a commitment to the human rights of women and to the fulfilment of obligations undertaken in Beijing through the Platform for Action as well as other international instruments.

Of the laws cited in the 45 countries included in Equality Now's report, 9 have been superseded or repealed. Thirty-six other countries cited in the report continue to have discriminatory laws in force. Some of these countries are members of the Commission on the Status of Women. We urge each member State to examine its own laws and the laws in our report carefully, to pledge to eliminate all discriminatory laws, and to take immediate, concrete steps to that end.

Law is the most formal expression of government policy. Explicitly discriminatory law is a fundamental abrogation of basic human rights. We have highlighted de jure discrimination with regard to violence against women, personal status, economic status, and marital status. Of course, discrimination is far more widespread than explicitly discriminatory law, and our report is itself only a sampling of such laws. A key step, however, in supporting the diverse priorities for social change that women have voiced, is to take action on a concrete pledge, almost a decade old, to eradicate the most blatant expressions of inequality.

In addition to the leadership role taken by individual members, the Commission as a whole has a mandate from the General Assembly to monitor the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. We hope that the Commission, as an essential component of its focus this year on the human rights of women, will adopt a resolution reminding Governments of their commitment and the target date of 2005 agreed in the Outcome Document, expressing concern over the continuing existence of so many discriminatory laws, and urging all Governments to take immediate action to rescind these laws.

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Statement submitted by Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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Canadian Voice of Women for Peace discussion paper

Abstract for discussion paper

This paper is a brief description of research first undertaken to fulfil requirements for a doctoral dissertation at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. It serves as an example of how participation and access to the media, information and communications technologies has been used to advance human rights and address the issues of media violence and pornography. It also provides a template for the further advancement and empowerment of women.

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Introduction

The first phase of this ongoing research project was completed in 1995. Originally, it was conducted as a case study for the purpose of examining policy development in Canada on the issues of media violence and pornography. In 2000, a book based on it was published, entitled *Mind Abuse: Media Violence In An Information Age*. This book has been the publisher's number one best seller ever since (www.web.net/blackrosebooks). Methodology for this research has been based on the fundamental assumption that violent and pornographic images in the media which compromise women adversely influence the entire community.

The action-oriented, participatory methods chosen were designed to include leadership of the community-based organization, Canadians Concerned About Violence In Entertainment (C-CAVE) founded in 1983. C-CAVE's mandate is to provide public education on what the research on media violence and pornography shows. The public has a right to know that the overwhelming weight of findings points towards harmful effects for all members of society, not just women and children.

In the early years, C-CAVE collaborated with the American-based National Coalition on Television Violence, founded by the American Medical Association and American Parent-Teachers Association. More recently, collaboration has taken place with numerous community- and university-based groups, among them The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace; University Women's Club of Toronto; Science for Peace, based at the University of Toronto; MediaWatch, founded by The National Action Committee on the Status of Women; Friends of Canadian Broadcasting and the Killology Research Group, Jonesboro, Arkansas, founded by United States Lt. Col. Dave Grossman.

The primary objective has been to investigate the issues from the standpoint of blocks to the development of effective strategies for change. Working with members of the media themselves, through countless media interviews, has helped to facilitate adult education and heighten public awareness.

Active methods have also included numerous government consultations at the provincial, federal and international levels, as well as speeches, lectures and workshops at conferences in universities, community colleges, schools and libraries. Within the community at large, speeches are given to service organizations, such as Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, church groups, parent-teacher associations and men's breakfast clubs.

The problem

A central part of the problem addressed is the issue of censorship in the perennial public debate over media violence and pornography; that is, whether or not cultural commodities that unduly exploit violence and promote gender inequality should be restricted at the point of production and distribution. This has invariably precipitated strong views on what constitutes freedom of expression and whether or not there are reasonable limits. Many scholars, as well as members of the public at large have argued for decades that the answer is yes. Provision of information is now largely dictated by dominant corporate and political interests. This is usually profit driven with little or no regard for the public interest. In a democracy, the

majority ought to choose the rules it wants to live by, and in recent years, the majority of Canadians, have demonstrated that they want less violence, both in real life and in the media.

So far, whenever the issue has been addressed at all, as it was by the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission, in the early 1990s, the emphasis has been confined to the harmful effects of media violence on children rather than on society as a whole. While he was chairman of the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission, Keith Spicer urged the introduction of "tough new codes" on violence for the industry at large. However, from the very beginning, the problem with the code approved by the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission for private television broadcasters was that it ignored the research demonstrating harmful effects on adolescents and adults as well as children, the extent to which children adopt the media habits of other adults, including parents and the fact that once a cultural commodity is on the market, children of all ages tend to end up with access to it regardless of warnings, blocking devices and other measures developed for their protection. Also, it was never designed to restrict advertising and promotion of this kind of excessive material for which, for example, legislation has already been designed in the province of Quebec and several European countries.

Growing urgency for solutions

Social and economic trends in which familiar problems involving harmful effects that have been around since the early days of movies and television are multiplying along with new forms of communications technology, such as the Internet and computer and video games. Proliferation of both the technology and harmful effects underscores the long overdue need for policy makers to address the issue of content along with ownership, protection of copyright and privacy. Where globalization is concerned, women are particularly vulnerable in matters involving the media. With growing conglomeration of ownership and control, more and more of our information-based economy involves popular culture commodities laced with violence because it sells well in a global economy and translates easily into any language. Now estimated at US$ 30 billion, pornography — a key aspect of the burgeoning international sex slave trade — is still the leading export in these commodities for Americans who, although they are responsible for over 50 per cent of all cultural products distributed around the globe, continue to import less than 2 per cent.

In 1966, these trends led to the founding of the Convention for the Cultural Environmental Movement at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. It was attended by a coalition of over 150 independent organizations and supporters from every state in the United States and 63 countries including Canada, three of whom were members of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace. The author, representing C-CAVE as a co-sponsor, was elected to and served on the Convention for the Cultural Environmental Movement Steering Committee until 2000. The aim is to address the problems of an increasingly centralized, globalized and mass-marketed media environment and to move towards a more democratic cultural policy.

Conclusion

The research demonstrates that on crime-related matters for budgetary reasons alone, the focus must shift to prevention. This means addressing the twin issues of media violence and pornography. Action is required in all sectors of society, with much more evidence of commitment from industry itself. So far, the trend has been towards more sophisticated forms of electronic abuse of women and children, in particular, with any restriction of corporate freedom of enterprise purposely defined as censorship. As a result, the onus of responsibility and accountability tends to focus exclusively on the parent, the teacher and the errant teenager, with industry and government excused. The differences between corporate freedom of enterprise and individual freedom of expression are still poorly understood and they pose a major challenge for educators.

It is generally agreed that parents, teachers and health professionals have fundamental responsibilities in supervising and restricting the media diets of children. However, it is naive and unrealistic to assume that they can possibly address the current health crisis without cooperation from government and industry, when our children's principle storytellers are now large media conglomerates with very little to tell but a great deal to sell. Simply put, this is NOT a censorship issue, it is a health as well as gender issue. There are over 55 recommendations for action in both the above-mentioned book and thesis. Listed below are six recommendations.

Recommendations

1. Bold steps using multimedia must be used to bump up the profile of media violence as an urgent and growing mental health problem with more help enlisted from health, medical and teaching organizations.

2. Discussion of issues involving community, national and international security and trade should be broadened to include policy development that addresses the well-known links between media violence and errant behaviours such as air, road and hockey rink rage; both male and female youth gangs; serial killers and snipers; the growing sex slave trade and global terrorism.

3. Tax breaks, credits, incentives and shelters for the production and distribution of harmful violent and pornographic media should be eliminated at all levels of government.

4. Legislation banning advertising directed to children 13 years and under on the basis of research showing harmful effects should be widely implemented based on models which already exist in the province of Quebec in Canada and several European countries. Such legislation, currently under consideration within the European Union, should be quickly approved and adopted.

5. Attention that began in the early 1990s to issues involving media violence and industry's responsibility for better adherence to codes of violence and sex role stereotyping in content must be revived.

6. The Cultural Environment Movement should be accelerated along with implementation of its Agenda for Action approved at its founding Convention in 1996.